

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet comprising a substrate having a pressure-sensitive adhesive layer on at least one side thereof, wherein the whole of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is formed of an aqueous dispersion pressure-sensitive adhesive composition containing, as a base polymer, (A) an acrylic polymer containing a (meth)acrylic acid C₄₋₁₂ alkyl ester as the major monomer component; ~~and wherein~~ in a surface portion of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer within the range of up to 3 nm inward from the outer face of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, (B) an anionic emulsifier containing a sulfur atom is contained in a proportion of from 0.1 to 3 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) that forms the surface portion of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, wherein the concentration of the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom is increased inward from the surface; and wherein (C) at least one hydrophilic polymer selected from a homopolymer of polyethylene glycol, a homopolymer of polypropylene glycol, polyvinylpyrrolidone, polyvinyl alcohol, and poly-(meth)acrylic acid is contained in a proportion of from 0.5 to 15 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of non-volatile matters in the aqueous dispersion pressure-sensitive adhesive composition of the whole of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer,

wherein the hydrophilic polymer is added as an aqueous solution after the polymerization of the acrylic polymer.

2. (previously presented): The pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet according to claim 1, wherein the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom is at least one sulfur atom-containing anionic emulsifier selected from alkyl sulfate anionic emulsifiers, polyoxyethylene alkyl ether sulfate anionic emulsifiers, polyoxyethylene alkylphenyl ether sulfate anionic emulsifiers, sulfonate anionic emulsifiers, and sulfosuccinic acid anionic emulsifiers.

3. (previously presented): The pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet according to claim 1, wherein the proportion of the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom in the whole of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is from 0.5 to 5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) according to the aqueous dispersion pressure-sensitive adhesive composition of the whole of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer.

4. (original): The pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet according to claim 1, wherein in the surface portion of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer within the range of up to 3 nm inward from the outer face of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, a ratio of sulfur element by the ESCA measurement is less than 1 atomic %.

5. (previously presented): The pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet according to claim 1, wherein the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer on one side of the substrate has a multilayered structure; an outermost layer of the multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer has a thickness of from 1 to 5 μm and contains the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom in a proportion of from 0.1 to 3 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) that forms the outermost layer of the multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer; and the multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, as a whole, contains (i) the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom in a proportion of from 0.5 to 5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) that forms the multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer and (ii) the hydrophilic polymer (C) in a proportion of from 0.5 to 15 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of non-volatile matters in the aqueous dispersion pressure-sensitive adhesive composition that forms the multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer.

6. (previously presented): The pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet according to claim 1, wherein the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is formed of the aqueous dispersion pressure-sensitive adhesive composition containing the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom in a proportion of from 3 to 5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A); and in the surface portion of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer within the range of up to 3 nm inward from the outer face of

the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom is contained in a proportion of from 0.1 to 3 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) that forms the surface portion of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer.

7. (original): The pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is a porous substrate.